



NEWS RELEASE

From Mayor Dean DePiero

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Jack P. Marschall
(440) 885-8181 or (216) 346-9935 (cell)

PARMA'S PETS BETTER PROTECTED BY CITY FIREFIGHTERS

(PARMA) – Parma City Firefighters will hold a pet life-saving demonstration Friday morning, August 1 at Parma Fire Department Headquarters, adjacent to Parma City Hall on Ridge Road.

City firefighters are receiving new, specially-designed pet oxygen masks that have proven to save pets' lives in home fire rescues. Recent fundraising by the Parma Animal Shelter is paying for the pet oxygen masks, equipping each of Parma's five fire stations with two pet masks per station. The Parma Fire Department has already been using the pet oxygen masks for the past two years.

"Like all first responders, Parma Firefighters put their lives on the line every day they come to work," said Parma Mayor Dean DePiero. "Their mission is saving lives and property. The masks are an added bonus to ensure everyone, including the family pet, is safely rescued from a burning home."

Pet advocate groups say firefighters in more than 150 U.S. cities and towns are now equipped with more than a thousand sets of the specially-designed pet resuscitation masks

"We appreciate the addition of new pet oxygen masks," said Parma Fire Chief John French. "The pet masks are small and better designed to provide a good seal on dogs and cats that have been overcome by smoke in a house fire. They work much better than using masks made for people. Several of our firefighters have used them – and they really do the job."

"Parma Fire would also like to remind people that once you have been able to escape your home during a fire, never return to save property, pets or even people. Fire can grow very rapidly and you may not have time to get in and out a second time."

The small oxygen masks for pets are quickly becoming standard equipment for firefighters. An estimated 60 million American households have pets, but statistics on how many die in house fires are unavailable.

(more)

Manufacturers say the cone-shaped masks are available in sets of three – a large canine, a small canine and a feline mask – in order to accommodate a wide range of pets.

According to firefighters and pet advocates, the masks are critically important because pets are a greater risk of smoke inhalation since they often hide during a house fire. In addition, human oxygen masks don't fit properly over the animal's snout.

Parma's pet life-saving demonstration will begin at 10 a.m. Call 440-885-8166 for additional information.

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